ΑΝΑΛΥΣΙΣ.

THE Looſing of Saint *Peter's* Bands;

Setting forth
The true Senſe and Solution
OF THE

COVENANT

In point of

CONSCIENCE,

SO FAR
As it relates to the Government of the Church by EPISCOPACY.

By *JOHN GAUDEN*, D.D.

Acts 16.26. *The foundations of the Priſon were ſhaken, the doors opened, and every ones bands were looſed.*
1 Tim. 1.5. *Now the end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conſcience, and faith unfeigned.*
Non eſt conſcientia ſine ſcientia; nec pura eſſe poteſt, ſi ſit cæca. *Bern.*

LONDON,
Printed by *J. Macock*, for *Andrew Crook*, at the Green Dragon in St *Pauls* Church-yard. 1660.

Books written by Dr. *Gauden*, and Sold by *Andrew Crook*, at the *Green-Dragon* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard.

1. *Hieraspistes*, A Defence for the *Ministry* and *Ministers* of the Church of *England*.

2. Three Sermons preached on publick occasions.

3. *Funerals* made *Cordials*, in a Sermon preached at the Interment of the Corps of *Robert Rich*, Heir apparent to the Earldom of *Warwick*.

4. A Sermon preached at the Funeral of Dr. *Ralph Brownrig* Bishop of *Exceter* (*Decemb.* 17. 1659.) with an account of his *Life* and *Death*.

5. A *Petitionary Remonstrance* in the behalf of many thousand Ministers and Scholars.

Καιρῳγοι *sive Medecastri*, Slight healers of publique hurts, set forth in a Sermon preached in St. *Pauls* Church, *London*, before the Right Honorable the Lord Mayor, Lord General, Aldermen, Common Council, and Companies of the Honorable City of *London*, *Feb.* 28. 1659. being a day of solemn Thanksgiving unto God, for restoring the Secluded Members of Parliament to the House of Commons, (And for preserving the City) as a Door of Hope thereby opened to the fulness and freedom of future Parliaments; The most probable means under God for healing the Hurts, and recovering the Health of these three Brittish Kingdoms.

Μεγαλεῖα Θεῦ, Gods great Demonstrations and Demands of Justice, Mercy, and Humility, set forth in a Sermon preached before the Honorable House of Commons, at their Solemn Fast, before their first Sitting, *April* 30. 1660.

To his Honoured Friend

Sir *Lawrence Brumfeild* Knight,

And Colonel in *London.*

SIR,

WEll knowing (as St. *Bernard* ſpeaks) how tender and delicate a thing Conſcience is; how it is not to be baffled or deluded with any *Sophiſtry*; nor raviſhed or captivated by any *violence* and *tyranny*; nor *cajoled* or *trepanned* by any *Policy* and *Hypocriſie*; but (apart from all fraud or force) it is then moſt at its *eaſe*, *freedom*, and *tranquility*, when it hath moſt light and ſerenity to ſee its duty, alſo moſt *liberty* to act according to thoſe rules of Right Reaſon and Religion, which are not partial, flexible, and mutable, but *univerſal*, *fixed*, and *eternal.* The tenderneſs of conſcience.

§. I have here endeavoured to give you and others (upon your motion) that ſober ſenſe of the Covenant whereof I believe it is only capable before *God*, before all good *Chriſtians*, and in a mans own *well-informed conſcience.* The rules of conſcience.

§. Which muſt, and at laſt will judge of things in

point of *ſcruple* or *obligation*, not by the *occaſion* beginning them, or the *power* impoſing them, or the *paſſion* clamoring, or the *multitude* applauding, or the *ſucceſs* abetting, or the *pertinacy* maintaining them: Nor yet by the *ſuperſtition* of ſome men devoutly doting for a while upon that as a goddeſs or an *Image faln* from heaven, when it may be (indeed) but the late invention of ſome *cunning work-men*, whoſe golden rings and *ear-rings* being melted in the *furnace* of *civil wars*, may ſometimes bring forth ſuch a thing as *the Authors* and *Abettors* will needs vote to be *their God*.

§. But the *true light* and *medium* of *conſcience*, as to its *Judgements*, *Practice*, *Peace* and *Perſeverance*, muſt be by thoſe clear, pregnant and conſtant *beams* of *right Reaſon* and *true Religion*, which ſhine in the *brightneſs* and ſtability of *Divine* and *Humane Laws*, which are the ſolid *Pillars* of truth, the firm *ſupports* of duty, the *ſure bounds* of obedience, and the *ſafe repoſe* of conſcience.

§. All other *ſuperſtructures* of *fancy*, *policy* and *Intereſt*, as *hay*, *ſtraw*, and *ſtubble* will periſh; but thoſe others will out-laſt the laſt *conflagrations* which ſhall make a *fiery trial* of all mens thoughts, deſigns and actions both *publique* and *private*, whether they be made up of popular and *peeviſh droſs*, or of ſuch *piety*, more precious then gold, which is both pure and *permanent*.

Freedom from paſſion and prejudice in caſes of conſcience.

§. In this great concern therefore of conſcience, I muſt ſtudy to be void of all *fear* and *flattery* of men, ſeparate from all crouds of *paſſions* and *prejudices*, free from *popular Petitions*, and the *two Houſes reſolutions*; from *Scottiſh importunities*, and *Engliſh* com-

compliances; not obnoxious to the *Court* or the *Country*, to the Assembly or the High-Commission, to *Episcopal Infirmities*, or *Presbyterian insolencies*; but as in the presence of God, and before his *Tribunal*, so serious, intent, upright and unbyassed shall I declare my judgement to you, to your City, to my Country, and to our most *welcome King*; to my *reverend Fathers*, and *brethren* of the *Clergy*, and to my dear *Mother the Church of England*, for whose sake nothing must seem hard, or too much to be done or suffered by me, or any of *her Sons*, since we have the great *Patterns*, both of our *late Soveraign*, who suffered as a Martyr in her defence, and of our *blessed Saviour*, who was crucified for her redemption.

§. As for my Brethren of the Church of *Scotland*, I confess I understand not their *motions* or *mutations*, because I think they once enjoyed the best *constitutions* of *Episcopacy* in the world; I have a Christian pity and charity for them; I leave them to that *liberty* which is the fruit, not of the *swords* and *passions* of *man*, but of the *Word and Spirit of God*; which clearly unites *Loyalty* and *Religion*, *Duty* and *Devotion*, *Reformation and Moderation*, *Order and Counsel*, *Eminency* and *Harmony*, in one *paternal*, *fraternal* and *filial* unity of *Bishops*, *Presbyters* and *People*.

§. As to the scruple or *case of conscience* then, with which you tell me, many sober and honest men, are by their once taking the Covenant so scared from all *complyings* with any *Church Government* under any name of *Bishops*, or notion of *Episcopacy*, never so reformed and regulated, that they fear by looking back to the *Primitive*, *Catholick* and

The shiness of some mens consciences as to Episcopacy.

and *universal Government* of this and all other antient Churches, to be turned into *pillars of Apostacy*, as *Lots* wife, was into a pillar of salt. And to prevent which sad *Metamorphosis* in City and Country, my *Answer* or *Resolution* in point of Conscience as to the *Covenant*, so far as it relates to *Episcopacy* is this.

Answers oblique.

1. The Covenants defectiveness as to authority and Law.

First, I might shrewdly batter the *Covenant*, by urging the defectiveness of, and so the invalidity of any *lawful*, *constant* or *compleat authority* in it, capable to bind the Subjects or people of *England*, either in the Court of conscience, or any other (*Ecclesiastical* or *civil*) *Judicature*; in which nothing can have any permanent *bond* or *tye of Law* (except Gods Word) without the Kings *consent*, no more than the vow of a *servant*, or *son*, a *daughter* or *wife* (in *Moses* Law) could bind them without, yea, against the declared *consent* of their *Master*, *Father* or *Husband*, under whose protection they were.

Numb. 30. 2.

2. The violence of the times.

Secondly, I might eccho and retort upon the *Covenant*, the *violence* and *noise* of those *times* in which it was first hatched in *England*, and brought forth by the *Midwifery* of *Tumults* and *Armies*, of *engaged*, yea *enraged parties and factions*, whose *wrath and policies* were not probable to *work the righteousness* of God; nor did they seem good Angels, which troubled our waters to an healing, but evil ones sent in Gods just anger amongst us *to turn our waters into blood*.

3. The novelty of it as to our laws.

Thirdly, I might further urge the *novelty* and *partiality* of the *Covenant*, as to the *English Laws* and *genius*; that it was from a *foraign influence* and *design* first invented, then obtruded on this Church and

and State, contrary to our *antient Laws*, and *Constitutions* both *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, to which *King* and *People* were bound, till by mutual *consent* they were *altered*; which was never yet done in the *point of Episcopacy*.

Fourthly, It might seem *odious* to reflect upon this *Covenant*, as to the sad effects, and unblest *consequents*, which like black *shadows*, have attended its *appearing* and *prevailing* in *England*, and in *Scotland* too. What *havocks* followed in Church and State? What *improsperities*, *disorders*, *contempts*, *confusions*, *wars*, *spoils*, *and bloodshed* upon all estates and degrees; besides the *contempt of Religion*, the *neglect of Sacraments*, the *expulsion of the Liturgie*, and the *aviling*, no less then dividing of *Ministers*, (who instead of *Okes* and *Cedars* of God, formerly frequent in this Church, I mean Divines of *great gravity*, and *excellent learning*, *worthy of double honour*) every where shrunk and dwindled to *Plebeian Shrubs*, and *popular parasites*, the pity of the more pious, and scorn of the more petulant sort of men. 4. The sad and tragick consequences of it.

Fifthly, Nor will I insist upon the *baffling* of the *Covenant*, before it was adult or many years old; how it was soon made *Nehustan*, and reduced to *nothing*, by *counter and cross engagements*, after it had served as one of the great rocks for the *Kings shipwrack*, no less then the Churches and States; nor did the *Covenant* ever thrive, after it was *watered* with the *Kings blood*, wherein many men had an hand who had been *Zealous Covenanters*. If it was so easily vacuated in point of its *express loyalty* for the Kings preservation; I do not see how it should be so binding in case of *abjuring* or *extir-* 5 The baslings and annullings of it by counter engagements.

tirpating of all *Epiſcopacy*, though reformed and regulated as it ought to be.

6. Its variating from, if not croſſing former lawfull Oaths of King and people,

Sixthly, wherein it is very conſiderable how the Covenant (if ſo interpreted) muſt needs grate ſore upon, and pierce to the very quick thoſe former *lawful oathes*, which had prepoſſeſſed the *ſouls* and *conſciences* of moſt of us in *England*; not onely of Subjects as thoſe of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, beſides that of *Miniſterial*, *canonical obedience*, to our *lawful ſuperiours* in Church and State; but even the *conſcience of the late King*, as he was bound by his *Oath* at his Coronation to preſerve the rights and franchiſes of the Church; which the King rather than break, as ſome men urged him, choſe to dye and loſe *all in this world*; as he declared to many at the *Iſle of Wight*; and to Mr. *Marſhal* with others, at *Newcaſtle*; from which Oaths, as we know no *abſolution*, ſo, nor can there be any *ſuperfetation* of ſuch a *contradictory Vow and Covenant* without *apparent perjury*, which we preſume the *covenant* never intended, nor included; or if it did, it is therein of no *bond* or *validity*, as to any good mans *conſcience* againſt *previous lawful oaths*, which muſt be kept.

7. It threatens dangerous Schiſm.

Seventhly, Beſides, if the *Covenant* were deſigned, as wilfully excluſive and *totally abjuring* of all *Epiſcopal Order and Government* in this Church of *England*, it muſt needs run us upon a great *rock* not onely of *Novelty* but of *Schiſm*, and daſh us both in opinion and *practice* againſt the *judgment* and *cuſtome* of the *Catholick Church*, in all places and ages (till of late years) from the Apoſtles days, with whom we ought to keep *communion* in all things of ſo *antient tradition*, and *univerſall obſervation*;

vation; nor may we ſo comply with a few *reformed Churches* of *latter dayes* (whoſe *want* but not contempt of *Biſhops*, alſo the *neceſsity of times*, and *diſtreſs of affairs* put upon them, either by the policies of *Princes*, or the *impatience* and *prejudice* of *people*, or the covetouſneſs and *ſacriledge* of both may excuſe, while they approve and *venerate Epiſcopacy* in others) yet with theſe we muſt not ſo comply, as to put a *reproach*, *ſcandal*, *ſcruple* or *affront* upon all other *Chriſtian Churches* at this day in all the world; among whom, not one ever was of old, or is to this day in any Kingdom to be found without their *Biſhops*, as derived by the *ſucceſsion* of *all times* from the *Apoſtles*; nor is the aboliſhing of *Epiſcopacy* a ſmall wall of *partition* newly ſet up to keep all *Papiſts* from due *Reformation*.

8. The beſt ſenſe and uſe of the Covenant.

Eightly, I might further add, how much more *equal* and *ingenuous*, *loyal* and *religious* were it for all ſober-meaning *Covenanters* to *reduce* and *confine* their conſciences, as well as their *Covenant*, from ſuch an *extravagant*, *diſloyal*, *unlawful*, *enormious*, and *ſchiſmatical ſenſe*, to which ſome do wreſt and torture it (in which it could neither be *lawfully taken*, nor can be kept with *honeſty*, as againſt all *Epiſcopacy*) and rather to retire to that ſober ſenſe wherein alone it might lawfully be taken, if it had been impoſed by due *authority*, or were *ſpontaneouſly aſſumed*, which ſenſe can reach no further than thoſe abuſive *exceſſes* or *defects* of *Church Government* under *Biſhops*, ſo far as they were *really* ſuch, either by the *inconvenience* of the *conſtitutions* and *cuſtoms* in *England*, or at leaſt as they appeared ſuch to theſe *Covenanters*, as to the execution of

 that

that *authority*, through the *faults* or *infirmities* of ſome *Biſhops* and their inſtruments, who poſſibly were not ſo worthy and *good*, or not ſo *wiſe* and *diſcreet*, as became *Chriſtian Biſhops*, or *Eccleſiaſtical Governours* of Chriſts Church. But it is a moſt *irreligious*, as well as unreaſonable (*Ametry*) tranſport, for men to *covenant* againſt all the right uſe of *things that are good*, becauſe of the abuſe incident to them, by men or times that may be evil.

9. Its pretended authority from examples in the O. Teſt.

Ninthly, It were eaſie to level to the ground all thoſe fair but fallacious *pretences* drawn to *fortifie* the *Covenant*, from *Scripture examples*, wherein the *Iews* ſometimes ſolemnly renewed their *Covenant with God*; but it was that expreſs *Covenant* which God himſelf had firſt made with them in *Horeb* and Mount *Sina*, punctually preſcribed by God to *Moſes*, and by *Moſes* (as their *ſupream Governor* or King) impoſed upon them; this they ſometime *renewed* after they had broken it by their apoſtacy to *falſe* and *ſtrange gods*: But bleſſed be God, this was not the caſe of the Church or people of *England*, nor was there any need of ſuch *covenanting*, any more then there was any *Moſes*, or *Hezekiah*, or *Ioſiah*, or any chief Governour commanding it: Nor (alas!) was this *Covenant* any divine dictate or Soveraign *preſcription*, but the petty *compoſition* of a few politick men, *Subjects* not *Princes*, and very *mean Subjects too* ſome of them, either as *Lawyers* or *Miniſters*, a great part of whom I and others well knew to be no very great Clerks or Stateſmen; and fitter for a *country Cure*, than to contrive and compoſe *Solemn Leagues* and *Covenants*, to be impoſed upon *Churches* and *Kingdoms*, (yea, and upon

upon their *Kings* too) in whose Dominions were many thousands equals and Superiors to those Masters, whose heads rather than their hearts, and their State correspondencies more than their conscience; brought forth this *ovvenant.*

Lastly, I might truly alledge against the *novelty of the Covenant* in the Church of *England*, that there is no *precept* or *patern* for any such in all the *New Testament*, nor in all *succeeding ages* of the Christian Church; we never read nor heard of any *Covenanting* Christians (until the *Ligue sainte* in *France*) except those who in one baptism were sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and so entered into that *Covenant* which God makes *with us*, and *we with him*, in that holy *laver of Regeneration*; this is the *new* and Evangelical *Covenant* of all true Christians; this *we break* by *wilful* and *presumptuous sins*; this *we renew* by *true repentance*, and by worthy *participation* of the *body* and *blood of Christ* in the *Sacrament of the Lords Supper.*

10. No evangelical example of any such Covenant in any Christian Church of old.

§. How vastly different from this sacred covenant, this late piece of *policy*, more then *piety* is; and how little the true *Covenant* of a Christian binds him by his *Baptism* or *Repentance*, or the *Eucharist*, against all Episcopal Government, I leave to all *sober-minded* Christians to judge; since both the power of ordaining Ministers, and by them to consecrate and celebrate both *Sacraments*, was ever derived from and by *Bishops of the Church*, as the chief *conservators*, *cisterns*, and *conduits* of all Ecclesiastical *Authority* and Ministerial power from the very Apostles, the first Bishops of the Church, *Acts* 1. who had the same *immediately* from Christ; who was, and

ever is the great *Biſhop* and *Paſtor* of our ſouls; to feed and rule his *Church*, not onely by his *word* and *Spirit*, but by ſuch *Shepheards* and *Rulers* as he hath in all *ages* ſet over his *flock*; of which *Biſhops* were ever eſteemed the Angels, Preſidents, or chief Fathers; whom utterly to *deſtroy*, and violently to *extirpate* out of this or any Chriſtian Church, is not onely to offer ſignal and intolerable *injuries* to the perſons of ſuch excellent *Biſhops* as *England* lately had, and ſtill may have, but further mightily to abate the honor of this whole Church, and its Miniſtry, by taking away all the rewards and encouragements of *Learning* and *Religion*; yea and to ſcandalize all Churches by aboliſhing ſuch a venerable order and univerſal cuſtom in the Church, as hath no *origine* but that of the Apoſtles, and looks very like an immediate *Inſtitution of Chriſt*, either preceptive and explicite, or tacite and exemplary.

The juſt abatement of Covenanters heats and rigors.

§. So that if this were the ſenſe and intent of the *Covenant-makers*, and *takers*, to extirpate and aboliſh, not the *abuſes*, but the very *uſes* of all *Epiſcopal Order* and *Government*, the great *Boanergeſſes* who thunder out ſo much terror againſt *Covenant-breaking*, may do much more juſtice and execution if they turn the mouths of their canons againſt ſuch *Covenant-taking*, which is better broken than kept in any *unlawfull ſenſe*, and beſt of all, when not at all taken, with any ſuch intention, which is as preſumptuous, as it was prepoſterous.

§. Theſe things being thus premiſed, are ſufficient (as I conceive) to abate the edge and rigor of the *Covenant*, as to its antipathy againſt all *Epiſcopacy*, and to ravel that *cable* or bond of *Religious obligation*,

gation, which ſome men do ſeem to twiſt and urge upon poor *peoples* conſciences in that point; when in *good earneſt*, there is neither *Law of God* or *man* requiring, impoſing or comprobating any ſuch Covenant, by any National or Eccleſiaſtical authority; ſo that it appears (at beſt) to be but a matter of *will-worſhip*, of humane and private invention, void of *publique* and plenary *injunction*, eſteemed by many but as a *ſtratagem of State*, *a flag of faction*, an *engine* framed on purpoſe to *batter down Epiſcopacy*, and the whole *Church of England*, in order to obtain the *ſpoiles* of them; not to puniſh and *amend* the evill that might be in Epiſcopall Government, or in ſome *Biſhops* and other *Miniſters*, but to ſeize all their *Eſtates*, and all the *Patrimony* of the *Church*, to the great enriching of ſome *ſacrilegious Proteſtants*, to the gratifying of ſome Preſbyters envy and revenge, but moſt of all to the *great joy* and triumph of the *Romiſh Party* and Jeſuitick deſigns, which were thought by many wiſe men to have been, if not the Sires, yet the Sibs to that Covenant; that they might help to ſpread it as a ſnare in *Mizpeh*, thereby to catch and deſtroy the *famouſeſt Biſhops*, the moſt *Renowned Clergy*, the beſt reformed and moſt flouriſhing *Church* in all the world.

§. But I will look upon this Covenant in the *ſofteſt ſenſe* that can be made of it, as a *voluntary Vow*, or *Religious Bond* which *private men*, and ſome *part onely of the Nation*, ſpontaneouſly took upon themſelves, in order to declare their ſenſe of duty to *God*, the *King*, the *Church*, their *Country*, and the *Reformed Religion*, to make themſelves more *ſtrictly*

The beſt aſpect of the Covenant conſidered in conſcience.

ſtrictly ſenſible of the ſacred and *civil obligation* reſpectively due to them, that ſo they might be more ready to *diſcharge them* in their places and *callings* by taking ſuch a *Covenant* freely, not for fear of *Priſon*, *Plunder*, *Sequeſtration*, and the like *wracks* of mens ſouls; the terrors of which made many, if not moſt of the *takers* of the Covenant, to take it; and yet I believe not one fourth part of the people of *England* now living ever did take it in any ſort; and very few but rigid *Bigots* and *virulent ſpirits* in any ſenſe, againſt *primitive*, *reformed*, and *regular Epiſcopacy*, ſo reduced to an efficacious *conjunction* with *Presbytery*, as the moſt Reverend Primate of *Armagh* propoſed in his *Reduction* of late, and ſo did the Lord *Virulam* long before in his conſideratio ns touching the Church of *England*, offered to King *James* in the beginning of his reign.

Anſwers direct. §. In this aſpect of the Covenant, as a religious *obligation*, either *newly made* or *renewed* upon the ſoul of any that *willingly* and freely took it, and who thereby think themſelves eternally obliged to *fulfill* the *letter of it*, or that ſenſe they had of it as to the matter of Church-government by *Epiſcopacy* or *Prelacy*, which they fancied to have abjured and renounced, no leſs than *Popery*; my *Anſwers* and *Solutions* are theſe:

1. What only can bind in it. Firſt, They are not the bare *words* of the *Covenant* which as *charmes* can bind any *mans conſcience*, to or againſt any thing; but it is that force of *Truth*, *Reaſon*, *Juſtice*, *Religion* and *Duty* to God, or man, our ſelves or others which morally and really obligeth men, either by Gods general or particular precepts; which are as iron or adamantine bands on every mans

mans ſoul, to chuſe good and do it, to hate evil and eſchew it, long before any of theſe *withes* or *cords* of mans combining and tying are put upon them, by themſelves or others.

Secondly, Nor can any ſuch Covenant bind any man in any *conſciencious bond*, meerly by the power of a mans own imagination, or by ſuch a prejudice and *preſumption* as he liſts to *form* and take up againſt any thing, ſhort of, or beyond the *merit* of it, either as *good* or *evil*. 2. Not the takers fancy or impoſers.

Thirdly, No ſuch Covenant can bind us to the *injury* of anothers liberty, *right*, *power*, or *lawful authority*, private or publick; and ſo not againſt that which is in the King and the *Biſhops*, or in the *major part* of the Church or of the Country, or of any *Parliament*, which may look upon *Biſhops* and *Epiſcopacy* with a far more *propitious eye* than thoſe that beheld it onely through the *Presbyterian ſpectacles*. 3. It cannot bind to the injury of others.

Fourthly, Such a Covenant can bind no man in conſcience againſt any thing that is in its nature *good*, or that is not *morally evil*; for this were for man to *bind himſelf* and others beyond Gods *eternal bonds* of *righteouſneſs*: They are Covenants with *Hell* and *Death*, which bind men either to what is *evil* and ſinful in its *nature*, or from what is allowed of God as *good* and *lawful*, yea and may be neceſſary in its time and *place*; now there is no doubt, but there is *much good* in *Epiſcopal order* and *government*; *much good* was done by it to the Churches of Chriſt in the primitive and *all times*; much to this Church of *England* ſince the *Reformation* and before; the *principles* and *proportions* of order, ſubordination 4. It cannot bind either to evil, or from good.

ordination and government (which hold good in *all other polities and fraternities*) cannot be evill in this of Episcopacy; It hath much of God in it, from *Scriptural precepts* and *patterns* in the *Jewish Church*, which the Christians followed in many things; It hath so much of Christs example, and the *Apostolick constitution*, of the *primitive use*, of Ecclesiastical custom, of holy mens general approbation, and universal imitation both here in *England* and elsewhere, that it were extream folly, madness, prophaness and blasphemy to *cry it down* for evil, or to engage and *covenant* against it as such, when it hath in it so *much good*, and so *attested* by experience, to be beneficial for the *well being*, yea almost for the compleat and *regular being* of any *Church*, and none more then this of *England* where people are not to be governed by their equals and inferiours, because they are in black Coats.

5. It cannot oblige to extirpate the use of what is good, because of any abuse.

Fifthly, No man may *vow or covenant*, much less keep any such *covenant* as he hath taken *intentionally* against the *evil* or *corruption* and abuse of any thing, so as to *involve the good* and *usefulness* of it, and to condemn that to *destruction* or *extirpation* with the other, as *Abraham* said to the Lord, *God forbid that the Judge of all the earth should destroy the righteous with the wicked; or cast the wheat with the chaff into unquenchable fire*: No, a good conscience abhors *confusion*; it doth not take or do things by *whole-sale* but by *retail, weighs all in the ballance of the Sanctuary, separates the precious from the vile*; the *superstructures of men* from the *foundations of Christ* and his *Apostles*, which stood firm for

for ſo *many ages*; it becomes the children of Wiſdom to juſtifie her, by trying all things, and holding faſt what is good.

Sixthly, As they that *covenanted* againſt *Popery*, cannot think they did *abjure*, or muſt *abhor* all thoſe *ſaving truths*, & *duties of Chriſtianity* which are mixed with *Popery*; no more can they juſtly think becauſe they *covenanted* againſt *Prelacy*, that is, againſt its *pride*, *preſumption*, *idleneſs*, *covetouſneſs*, and *tyrannie*, that therefore they are for ever *engaged* againſt the *order*, *preſidency*, and *paternal authority* of *Epiſcopacy*; mens malice and hatred may not go beyond the *grave*; if the *abuſes* and diſorders in *Prelatique Government* be *dead* and *buried*, true *Epiſcopacy* may yet have a bleſſed *reſurrection* from *corruption* to *incorruption*, from *diſhonour* to *honour*; which I hope, and pray, God will by the wiſdom of the King and his Parliament effect. 6. It obligeth not to abolish all that is good or Chriſtian mix'd with Popery.

Seventhly, No man may lawfully *vow* and *covenant* or accordingly act in any thing, which is not in his *power* and *diſpoſe*, in his *ſphear* and *calling*, beyond which *bounds* this *Covenant permits no man to go*; yea, it doth limit by theſe all his *engagement* and *activity*. Now certainly, the Government of the Church of *England*, eſpecially as *eſtabliſhed by Law*, neither was nor is in any *private mens power*, be they never ſo many, either to *alter*, or *innovate*, or *aboliſh* and *extirpate*; This is only in the power of the *King*, as *Supream*, by the Law of God and the Land, to protect and preſerve: Nor can it be changed but by his *Royal Aſſent* to the *Counſel* and *Deſire of the two Houſes of Parliament*: Nor may any man never ſo much for *Presbyterie*, or *Independcie*, or *Anarchy*, as to his private opinion, either

vow,

vow or *Covenant*, or act overtly and violently, further than by *humble Petition* or counsel against established and *legal Episcopacy*, no more than he may against *Monarchy*, because he prefers either *Aristocracy* or *Democracy*.

It cannot binde against what may after appear good.

Eightly, As no man could lawfully covenant against what he thinks to be good, or against what is less good then he desires and opines, but out of his *calling* and lawful power to effect; so, nor can any man in conscience be bound by any such *Covenant* (taken in a gross sense, or in general terms) against that which may upon second thoughts, or after view, and better information appear to be good and useful to him; he is here bound not to keep his *Covenant*, in the *Latitude* of his *mistakes* and *presumptions*, nor to act according to his *prejudices* and former *suppositals*, but rather to retract his *rashness* and *unadvisedness* in taking it at first, and to act according to the *present evidence* of what is *true*, *just*, *good*, *lawful*, and *useful*, even in *Episcopacy*, whereof he cannot but stand convinced, both by the principles of right Reason, and the proportions of all Government, and by the experience of the Defects, Deformities, and Inconsistencies of all other Models.

§. It is now high time, after so many *afflictions*, to learn *righteousness* and *wisdom*, and to discern between the *faults of men* or *times*; and the true *nature of things*; between *good and bad Bishops*; between *Pontifical Prelacy*, and *Paternal Episcopacy*, which is that wherewith all sober men *would be satisfied*, and against which no *Covenanter* could in *Reason* or *Religion* in *piety* or *policy*, in *prudence* or *conscience* be engaged.

Ninethly, The *cautious* and *conscientious Covenanter*

Covenanter therefore is now to take a calmer *view* and *exacter measure* of the *Covenant* than (perhaps) he did at the first *offer* and *taking of it*, which was in haste and heat, in fear and fury; what then he *greedily swallowed without chewing*, he should now *leisurely* and *soberly ruminate*; for in *lumps* it will not easily *digest* or *pass*; he may better learn what there is of God or good in it by the *still voice*, wherein now the Lords mercy appears and speaks to this *Church and Kingdom*, than in those *fires* and *earthquakes*, which at first represented this *Covenant* to him with *shining swords*. The duty of a cautious and conscientious Covenanter.

§. He must now distinguish what may be in it *of God*, what of *good and well meaning men*, and what of *evil* or *sinister* designs, at least as to the *event*; in what is good he may lawfully *persevere*; what may by some be urged to evil, he is to avoid; what he did weakly or *inconsiderately* in the *taking* or *pursuing* of it, he is to repent of and *retract*, by keeping in the *bounds* of duty, *allegiance* and subjection to God and his *Superiors* in *Church* and *State*.

Tenthly, and lastly, the most strict and severe *Covenanter* cannot but be satisfied and absolved in point of conscience, if first he hath and still doth in his place and calling *seasonably advise*, *humbly petition*, and *lawfully endeavour* to reform what is truly amiss in the *Church Government* by *Bishops*. Secondly, if he use the like *means* to restore and preserve, what he findes *good* and *useful* in Episcopacy. Thirdly, If he humbly submit to what the King in this point, as *Supream*, shall see fit to establish in his Church; which is very *probable* to be such, as will much differ from the former *way of Government*, as to any To The ease satisfaction of any conscientious Covenanter.

thing evil or inconvenient in it: Certainly, a little *change* really to the better, much more an honeſt and ingenuous *Reformation* of Epiſcopacy, beyond the former exceſſive or defective either conſtitution or execution of it, will abundantly abſolve the *honeſt*, yea, and the very litteral and complexive meaning of that *Covenant*; which may not be a *Bond of Iniquity*, or a *ſnare* and *gin* for Schiſm and Sedition to act by, to the *diſhonour of God*, to the *reproach* of the *Reformed Religion*, to the ſcandal of *forraign Churches*, and to the ruine of theſe ſomtimes ſo *famous* and *flouriſhing*; which the *King* and every good *Subject* are bound in conſcience to repair and reſtore, not only to, but (if it may be) beyond its *priſtine* condition; wherein ſome things poſſibly were ſo amiſs, that it will be happy to have them either ſupplyed as to the *defects*, or repreſſed as to the *exceſſes*, without any extirpation of what is holy and catholique, primitive and paternal, orderly, politick, and prudent in Epiſcopacy; which *Government* duly fitted and fixed, comprehends beyond any, all the *juſt intereſts of People* and *Presbyters*, no leſs than of *Biſhops* and of the *King*.

Reformed Epiſcopacy conſiſtent with the Covenant.

§. This *Right*, *Juſtice*, and *Duty* then every conſciencious *Covenanter* ows;

The duty and juſt dealing of an honeſt Covenanter.

1. To *God*, in approving, deſiring, loving, and uſing what is good.

2. To the *King*, as the chief Governour of the Church and State, enjoyning things *lawful* and *honeſt*, though not the very beſt.

3. To the *Biſhops* and *Fathers* of the Church, who have been many of them moſt injuriouſly uſed *many years*, and ought in Juſtice to be recompenced.

4. To

4. To all *learned* and *ſober Miniſters*, who have a long time been expoſed to all manner of diſcouraging and dividing *factions* among themſelves, and inſolencies from the people, for want of *King* and *Biſhop* to govern, guide, and protect them.

5. He owes this love, moderation, and charity to this *Church*, hereby to advance and ſettle the Unity, Peace, and Proſperity of it; which cannot be but in the way of Epiſcopacy duly conſtituted, and carefully executed.

Laſtly, he owes this care to his *own ſoul*, whoſe inward and eternal peace is not to be made up by *paſſion*, *ſuperſtition*, or *preſumption*, but by *meekneſs of wiſdom*, *juſtice*, *charity*, and *diſcretion*; as in all other things, ſo very much in this point of Epiſcopacy; ſo ſtudiouſly then put into the *Covenant* to ſerve a prevalent *Intereſt*, but no way in Conſcience to be now ſtretched againſt a right and regular Epiſcopacy, no more than Phyſick given to cure a Diſeaſe, ſhould like unmortified Quick-ſilver, be applyed to kill the man.

§ This I know was the ſenſe of the moſt learned Men in the Aſſembly, and of thoſe, who with my ſelf had as much right to ſit among them, as any others, but were not permitted, either by popular faction and tumult, or by other ſhufflings and reaſons of State, which took care to exclude or deter all the excellent *Biſhops of the Church*, and the moſt able of Epiſcopal Divines, for fear there ſhould have been any juſt plea for *moderate Epiſcopacy* againſt the then *Magiſtery* of *Presbyterie*. This I have oft heard M. *Marſhall* and others affirm (who had a great hand in penning and promoting the Covenant) and they owned it to ſome Forraign Divines,

The ſenſe which the prime authors of the Covenant gave of it.

vines, That the Covenant was levelled only at the (*Deſpoticum, Tyrannicum, regimen*) *miſgovernment* not the *Government* of *Epiſcopacy*. This is at preſent the ſenſe and hopes of the moſt learned and godly *Presbyterians*, whom I have lately ſpoken with in *London* and *elſewhere*; That if the ancient *lapſed* and *decayed frame* of Epiſcopal government were a little altered, it would ſatisfie the end and *letter* of the Covenant, which was not to deſtroy, but to build and repair, not to *conſume all*, but to uſe thoſe *materials* which were good in that *antient, noble, and venerable fabrick of Epiſcopacy*.

The ſpeedy ſettling this Church by Epiſcopacy.

§. Which I beſeech God may by his *Majeſties* Piety and Wiſdom be ſpeedily and reſolutely ſettled in its beſt conſtitution, wherein to take good counſel is Kingly and *Chriſtian*; but to tarry till all Sects and ſorts of people be agreed and ſatisfied, will be to expoſe his *Royal Authority* to *Undervaluings*, and this Church to *everlaſting Confuſions*.

§. Nor doth there need much *Counſel* to know, or *Courage* for to do, what is here meet to be done, in order to ſatisfie the moſt, and I may ſay the *beſt* of all ſorts in this *Kingdom*, both as to *minds, manners*, and *eſtates*. For his Majeſty hath not a *new Church* to build, but an antient and well-modelled one to reſtore: They are not *foundations* of faith or *good manners*, which are to be laid, but either ſome *neceſſary reparations* to be made in reference to ſuch decays, as long time brings upon the beſt things under heaven; or ſuch *pinacles* be taken down as being much waſted with age, rather *threaten* than *adorn* the Church of Chriſt; whoſe *dilapidations*, after all the

the covenanting complements and reformings have been ten times more in these last twenty years under the hands of *bungling Reformers*, (who would needs do Church work without the Master builders, Kings and Bishops) than they were for *fourscore years* since the *Reformation in England*, yea, or the first *Four hundred Years* of the Church in the *midst of Persecution*; when many godly Bishops were persecuted by Heathens and Heretiques; but this *Age* is the first *Parent* of that *Prodigie*, wherein *Orthodox* and *Reformed Christians*, either *Presbyters* or *People*, did *persecute godly Bishops*, (of the same *Faith* and *Profession*) yea, and Episcopacy it self, though never so Regular and Reformed; which could not justly be the meaning of the Covenant; and if it were, it cannot thereby binde any man that took it; further than to *repent* of his *rashness*, and to act contrary to so injurious, irreligious, irrational, and impolitique a sense. From which snare the Lord doth undoubtedly deliver every good mans conscience; For, as God cannot *tempt*; so, nor can any thing in his Name tye or binde men to any thing that is a sin: They that under any such sinister Notions, and unjust ends, lifted up *one of their Hands* to the most High God, to *Prophane his Holy Name*, had need bend both their *Knees*, and lift up both their *Hands* to Heaven, humbly to begge of God *Pardon* for their Folly, and Grace to return to that Duty which they owe to God, to the King, to *Bishops*, to this *Church*, to their *Country*, and to their *Consciences*.

The ruines of this Church the last twenty years for want of Episcopacy.

Thus

Conclusion.

§. Thus (Sir,) have I in two days finiſhed my *anſwer* and *Solutions*, as to the bondage and ſcruple of the Covenant in the caſe of *Epiſcopacy*, wherein I have freely ſet down my moſt impartial ſenſe and thoughts of it, being willing to *reconcile it* to Reaſon and Religion, as far as may be; beyond which it can have no *juſt influence*, *power*, or *efficacy* upon any *mans conſcience*: Nor would I have it ſo *accurſed of God* (though as yet it hath been no *Procurer* of any great bleſſings to us in the Church) as to be made the *Jeſuitick wedge* to keep us ever from *cloſing with* a right Epiſcopacy. Doubtleſs the ſenſe of the Covenant hath lately quickned many mens conſciences in their *Allegiance to the King*, ſo as to bring him (as *David*) home with infinite joy and tryumph; Nor do I deſpair but it may be applyed ſo (as in truth and Juſtice it ought) for the recovery and reſtauration of the Church of *England* to ſuch an happy *Order*, *Unity*, and *Government*, as is moſt deſired by all good *Biſhops*, by all grave *Presbyters*, and by all gracious *People*, who have *zeal* according to *knowledge*, and are not like a *Taylors Gooſe* very *heavie* and *hot*, but *blinde* and *dark*; apter to ſcorch and oppreſs, then to enlighten and direct themſelves or others.

Farewel.

June 12. 1660.

FINIS.